

APPLICATION FOR UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT

FOR

ORNAMENTATION FOR A HAT VISOR

BY

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[0001] This application claims the benefit of United States Provisional Application Ser. No. 60/391,131 filed June 25, 2002.

5 Field of the Invention

[0002] The present invention relates generally to the field of ornamentally decorating a hat or cap, and more specifically the ornamental decorating of a hat visor or baseball type cap visor.

Background of the Invention

0 [0003] Many hat wearers like to decorate the surface of their hats or caps. Some caps or hats have a visor or bill member either around the entire circumference of the brim of the hat dome or a portion of the dome. Such a visor or bill can be ornamentally decorated. Hats, like the baseball type cap, have a visor or bill located on a portion of the cap dome's rim to be worn over the eyes of the user or wearer. The baseball type cap has a visor or bill which is usually made of a fabric covering a cardboard or plastic type material to give it stiffness. Many hat visors
15 including the baseball type cap visor can be decorated with embroidery, lace, artificial flowers, sequins, fabrics, pins, clips, clutches, buttons and badges of all kinds and sorts or other decorations.

20 [0004] The present disclosure will address several significant and distinctly new characteristics which will become apparent as described in the detailed description. These significant advantages will be presented as specific and unique to the present disclosure and also contrasted to all other art as is presently available. In general, all prior art of ornamentally decorating the visor of a cap addressed hereafter, even when combined, elude the new art advantages of the present invention. First, the present invention uses an ornamental fastener to ornamentally decorate both the bottom and top surfaces of the cap type visor or bill of a hat when attached.

The ornamental fastener decorates the top surface with an ornament and secondly, decorates the bottom surface of the hat visor with an ornament, including the hat visor's edge. Furthermore, the ornamental fastening mechanism can be used to tether together more than one ornamentation located in different spots on the edge of the cap type visor. The present disclosure is also reversible as well as removable, without damaging the cap visor as some cap ornamentations will do. Furthermore, in an optional design, the present invention provides an adaptive fastener mechanism to accept modified lapel pin type emblems and other designated interchangeable ornamental fixture endings for ornamentation under or on top of the surface of a cap type visor. These new features will be more readily revealed in the detailed description of the present disclosure.

[0005] Examining the lapel pins as one common prior art ornamentation used to decorate a hat visor, it is notable to mention they are "lapel" pins foremost not designed for use with ball cap visors, and although removable and decorative, do not present a way to decorate the bottom or edge of a hat visor. While they do have interchangeable ornaments, they do not have an ornamental fastening mechanism for under a hat visor. Furthermore the fastening mechanism that is used is visible and somewhat unattractive, intended primarily for fastening and not decoration. The nail and catch is generally intended to be hidden under a lapel of a coat or shirt or dome of a cap. Usually the fastening mechanism has been plated with a bright nickel or gold finish plating to make it more pleasing if seen, yet in and of itself it is not primarily designed to be an ornament, but more a way to fasten. Furthermore to illustrate why lapel pins are not designed for ball cap bills, the lapel pin can damage the cap type visor by puncturing a hole in the visor. Some cap type visors also are too thick for the catch of a lapel pin to slip on the nail when the nail is stuck through a cap type visor and cannot hold on the nail sticking through on the opposite and underneath surface of the cap type visor. Of course, lapel pin couplings are not reversible.

[0006] The jewelry clutch type ornamentation has its own disadvantages when used on a hat visor in comparison to the present disclosure; again, the jewelry clutch does not decorate the

bottom or the edge of a hat type visor with another ornament, and the fastener of the clutch type ornamentation does not have interchangeable ornamental elements since the clutch is permanently attached. The clutch fastener itself is also diminishing in appearance and is not so much an ornament as it is a convenient fastening mechanism. Furthermore, as is the case with the lapel pins, the jewelry clutches are not specifically intended for hat type visors, but if used, are not designed to custom fit on a hat type visor as is noted when the hat type visor is different thicknesses. As also is the case with lapel pins, jewelry clutches do not address the issue of allowing for decorating of the hat type visor by tethering means, linked together by an ornamental fastening mechanism which can extend from one location on the edge of the hat type visor to another location on the edge of the hat type visor as will be explained further in the detailed description. The jewelry clutch likewise is not reversible or adaptable to receive a modified lapel pin emblem.

[0007] Embroidery, slip covers, and badges of all kinds with many different threading and fabrics are also used in ornamentally decorating a cap type visor. Slip covers that are available that slip over the entire visor of hats with either a partial cap type visor or one that surrounds the entire circumference of a hat dome such as is the typical "Cowboy or Western" hat. The ornamentation is a pocket type cover that slips over and envelopes the entire surface under and above the hat visor, yet offers no other significant and specific options or features as afforded the present disclosure. Other fabric ornamentation, such as embroidered patches, badges or threading that are sewn or glued directly to the hat visor are used to decorate, but are not removable and interchangeable adornment of the hat type visor and can damage the cap visor if removed since it is sewn or glued on.

[0008] Additionally, hat bands have been specifically designed for the crown of a hat, most notably a full circumference type hat visor like a Cowboy or Western hat. In this case, the hat band surrounds the entire crown. Such bands do not address the issue of an ornamentation for a hat type visor. The bands are more specifically used to decorate the crown of a hat, not the bill.

5 [0009] Lastly, there are some ornamental hat clips that are specifically designed to decorate a hat type visor. They use a single or two prong flat expandable plate bent around the edge of a cap to grip the top and bottom surface of a cap type visor at the same time in order to remain firmly affixed to the visor or brim. Hence there is a need for a way to transform the fastening mechanism of the ordinary hat clip into an entirely new concept of what an ordinary hat clip plate gripping mechanism of today cannot do, and thus form an entirely new art form of hat clips. The first of several significant differences is that hat clips do not decorate the underneath surface or edge of a cap type visor. Secondly, as is notable with the present disclosure, if a plate is used, the plate is part of the ornamental artistic design. Plates on present art are not
10 ornamental in design, but rather first and foremost a fastener. They interfere with the design of the ornament's outline on the exterior as they extend under the ornament down and around the edge of the hat type visor and are seen at a distance as part of the overall design of the ornament and at close range as a unattractive fastening mechanism. The plate fastening mechanism of today's hat clips also do not have the capability to have interchangeable and releasably attachable ornaments, and lastly are not reversible. The present disclosure provides an ornamentation not seen in prior art that specifically affix to a hat visor, by conveniently decorating a portion of the top, bottom and edges of the surfaces of a hat visor, presenting a pleasing and esthetic enhancement to the hat visor that also have certain additional releasably attachable ornamentally designed elements that can be removed and replaced with other
15 ornamentally designed elements to place on a hat visor. Furthermore, the present disclosure is adaptable to accommodate a modified lapel pin ornament or emblem. And lastly, the present disclosure is reversible, for there is ornamentation on the device for both sides of the baseball cap type visor.

25 [0010] As mentioned above, many ornamentation for hat visor decorating exist in the prior art. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 5,701,607 issued to Kaiser teaches an overlay for a hat visor. The overlay or cover is constructed of impermeable, flexible material. On the underside of the overlay is an adhesive covered by a protective film. This protective film is removed and the overlay is placed on top of the hat visor, and the adhesive holds the overlay in place.

5 [0011] U.S. Pat. No. 5,592,696 issued to Oliver describes a slip cover for the brim of a hat that consists of two substantially-annular pieces of fabric having an outer edge conforming to the size of a hat brim and an inner edge at least as large as the crown of the hat. The outer edges are joined to form a slip cover suitable for placement over the brim of any conforming hat, thereby changing the appearance thereof according to the designs on the fabrics utilized. The slip cover may be turned inside out and used reversibly to display the other side of the fabric which may contain different designs to provide yet another look for the hat. Another embodiment of the invention consists of a slip cover having the lower inner edge made of stretchable material and smaller than the crown of the hat, thereby providing an inner elastic band for engaging the head of a wearer and improving retention of the hat. In a third embodiment of the invention, the upper inner edge is also made of stretchable material and smaller than the crown of the hat so as to provide an outer ornamental band around the crown.

15 [0012] U.S. Pat. No. 6,044,495 issued to Ellman *et al.* teaches a detachable bill cover having the means for attachment built into the detachable bill cover enabling the wearer of baseball or like cap to slide on and slide off the detachable bill cover by use of a slide/track system that is affixed to the left side and the right side of the underside of the detachable bill cover.

20 [0013] U.S. Pat. No. 5,734,993 issued to D'Oca provides a woman's sports hat. A pin configured to represent the sport the woman intends to play while wearing the hat is inserted through two openings at the front of the hat so as to secure the hat to the woman's head. The hat will then resist being blown off in the wind, or falling off during physical, sports related activity. To further relate the hat and sport together a logo representing the same sport as the sports pin is imprinted or otherwise affixed to one or both sides of the hat. Reversible hats and caps can have different logos on the inside and outside of the hat so that the hat can simply be turned inside out, and the appropriate sports pin inserted in order to make the hat suitable for different sports, as, for example, golf and tennis.

25 [0014] U.S. Pat. No. 6,170,088 issued to Tate; John R. provides an improvement to a golf accessory formed with an exposed layer of fabric comprising a flat, thin object formed of ferrous

material attached to and concealed by said exposed layer of fabric at a selected location thereon, and a detached golf ball marker including a permanent magnet permanently incorporated therein, whereby the magnetic force of attraction of said magnet acts through said exposed layer of fabric to hold said golf ball marker against said exposed layer of fabric at said selected location when moved into proximity thereto.

[0015] U.S. Pat. No. 5,364,094 to Mustion describes a ball marking device adaptable to be worn on the outer clothing of a golfer for providing ready access to a ball marker. The ball marking device includes a metal button having a diameter of approximately 1-1/2". Attached to a back surface of the metal button is a pin clasp for securing the ball marking device to the clothing of the golfer. On a front surface of the metal button is a 1/2" diameter round rubber coated magnet secured to the metal button by glue. A 3/4" stainless steel disc is magnetically attached to the magnet such that it is secured to the button. When the golfer desires to mark his ball on a putting green, he merely disengages the marker disc from the magnet and places it at the desirable location. Once the golfer no longer wishes to mark his ball with the ball marking disc, he merely returns it to the magnet until its next use.

[0016] As established, many different ornamentations exist in prior art for decorating a visor of a hat, some for a full circumference hat visor around the crown of a hat and some for the baseball hat type visor. No present art addresses the need and significant advantages of having an ornamental piece specifically created with the unique ability to decorate the hat visor that when attached, decorates the top, bottom and edge surfaces of a hat visor, is removable, has interchangeable ornaments, is linkable, is reversible, and is adaptable to accept modified lapel pin type emblems so as to not puncture or glue to the surface of a cap bill, thus becoming an inexpensive way to uncharacteristically decorate the hat visor and create a pleasing and esthetic enhancement to an otherwise plain hat visor.

[0017] It is therefore an object of this invention to provide an external device that when applied to a hat visor in a combination provides ornamentation to the fastening mechanism as well as the

ornamentation the ornamental fastening mechanism affixes to, all without damaging or deforming the hat visor.

5 [0018] It is an object of this invention to provide an external device that when applied to a hat visor provides a unique and unconventional way of attaching to ornamentation for a hat visor as well as to the hat visor itself.

[0019] It is an object of this invention to provide an external device that when applied to a hat visor provides ornamentation for the underneath side of a hat visor as well.

[0020] It is an object of this invention to provide an external device that when applied to a hat visor is not damaging to the hat visor.

10 [0021] It is an object of this invention to provide an external device that when applied to a hat visor the ornamental device is reversible.

[0022] It is another object of this invention to provide an external device that when applied to a hat visor provides ornamentation for the edge of a hat visor as well.

15 [0023] It is another object of this invention to provide an external device that when applied to a hat visor may be linked with other external ornamental devices to extend along part of a cap bill edge and possibly completely extend around the entire edge of a hat visor by means of a fastening connector between the external ornamental devices.

20 [0024] It is another object of this invention to provide an external device that when applied to a hat visor may provide a way to releasably attach to a modified nail of a common lapel pin type ornamentation.

[0025] It is an object of this invention to provide an external device that when applied to a hat visor whose ornamental fastening mechanism have interchangeable ornamental parts that rest on both the top or bottom surface of the hat visor.

[0026] It is an object of this invention to provide an external device that when applied to a hat visor is reversible in lieu of its ornamentation on both surfaces of the ball cap type visor.

[0027] It is another object of this invention to provide an external device that when applied to a hat visor does not glue to the surface, puncture, or otherwise damage a hat visor.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0028] FIG. 1 is an isometric view of a preferred embodiment showing the ornamentation of the present invention gripping the top and bottom surfaces close to the edge of a hat visor with an ornamental spiral-like fastening mechanism and ornamental end members that are releasably attached onto the ornamental spiral-like fastening mechanism.

[0029] FIG. 2 is an isometric view of a preferred embodiment showing the ornamentation of the present invention gripping the top and bottom surfaces in two different locations close to the edge of a hat visor by two ornamental nose-ring like fastening mechanisms further linked by a chain-like band of ornamentation that releasably attaches onto the ornamental nose-ring like fastening mechanisms.

[0030] FIG. 3 is an isometric view of a preferred embodiment showing the ornamentation of the present invention gripping the top and bottom surfaces close to the edge of a hat visor with an ornamental nose-ring like fastening mechanism and ornamental end members that are releasably attached onto the ornamental nose-ring like fastening mechanism, with one ornamental end member modified to display a picture graphic.

[0031] FIG. 4 is an isometric view of a preferred embodiment showing the ornamentation of the present invention gripping the top and bottom surfaces close to the edge of a hat visor with an ornamental hook-shaped post fastening mechanism and different design ornamental end members that releasably attach onto the ornamental hook-shaped post fastening mechanism.

[0032] FIG. 5 is an isometric view of a preferred embodiment showing the ornamentation of the present invention gripping the top and bottom surfaces close to the edge of a hat visor with an ornamental hook-shape fastening mechanism with an eyelet on one end to receive an ornamental end member that snaps onto the eyelet of the ornamental hook-shape fastening mechanism.

5 [0033] FIG. 6 is an isometric view of a preferred embodiment showing the ornamentation of the present invention gripping the top and bottom surfaces close to the edge of a hat visor with an ornamental hook-shape fastening mechanism with an eyelet on one end further accepting a round catch to receive a modified or cut-off nail of a common type ornamental lapel pin end member that releasably slips into the hole of the catch fastening mechanism.

10 [0034] FIG. 7 is an isometric view of a preferred embodiment showing the ornamentation of the present invention gripping the top and bottom surfaces close to the edge of the apex of a hat visor with two ornamental nose-ring like fastening mechanisms molded onto two ornamental plates of any particular arbitrary design, the end members permanently attached onto the ornamental nose-ring like fastening mechanisms.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0035] Referring to FIGS. 1-7, ornamentation 10 of the present invention preferably comprises two ornamental end members 12 and 14 that are attached to a third bridging ornamental member being a malleable or flexible strand 16 that serves as a tether to allow attachment of ornamental end members 12 and 14 to form one whole ornamentation 10. The ornamental strand 16 is a fastening mechanism, preferably a stiff material such as spring steel wire or plate that when molded, resembles an open end ring or "U" shape like in FIGS. 1-7, will serve as a flexible ornamental clip to grip the top and bottom surfaces close to the edge 42 of a hat visor. Other materials as well, such as plastic, nylon, rubber and the like that yield themselves to similar properties can also be used and is well within the scope of the present disclosure, the material used not being a limitation. The opposing ornamental end members 12 and 14 of the ornamentation 10 are preferably cut, bent or molded units made of a metal, plastic, glass, crystal, rubber, cloth or any other material that might be attached as a cosmetic piece to the ornamental strand 16 of the ornamentation 10, or combinations thereof which lend themselves to a decorative aspect. It should be understood, however, that almost any material could lend itself to such properties and allow for cutting, bending and/or molding ease, for example, a plastic, nylon or the like can also be used to make the opposing ornamental end members 12 and 14 of the ornamentation 10 of the invention. While the manufacture of the ornamental strand 16 of the ornamentation 10 by cutting, bending, or molding the opposing ornamental end members 12 and 14 is preferred, it can also be appreciated that the ornamental strand 16 of the ornamentation 10 can also be formed in any fashion as long as it is able to attach to the top and bottom surfaces close to the edge 42 of a hat visor and allows for the attachment of opposing ornamental end members 12 and 14 either molded into the ornamental strand 16 or separate ornamental elements 20 as in FIG. 4, of the ornamental strand 16, and can be made of a plastic, nylon or other similar plastic raw materials and is well within the scope of the present invention. It should be understood that the ornamental strand 16 may be other such designs that render themselves to the specific use intended for the present disclosure such as in FIG. 7, and should not be considered a limiting factor; for other such ornamentations may contribute to the specific use intended, that

being the unique and specific decoration of the present disclosure to any type hat visor, or for the matter, visors without a cap dome.

[0036] In FIG. 1, end members 12 and 14 show a particular embodiment of the ornamentation 10 that preferably comprise a substantially spherical shape with a hole type fastening mechanism 18 as seen in its attached view to the ornamental strand 16, which is in itself a fastening mechanism of the ornamentation 10. Referring to the ornamental strand 16 of the ornamentation 10 in FIG. 1, as can also be extrapolated to all ornamental strands 16 of ornamentation 10 in FIGS. 1-7, it defines a void 28 thus rendering a tension grip fastening structure comprising an aperture or gap 30 which initiates the insertion of the edge of a baseball hat visor. In the preferred embodiment of the invention, aperture 30 negotiates the linear insertion of a baseball hat visor edge 42, the aperture 30 is desirably narrower than the thickness of a baseball hat visor edge 42 to yield a void 28 that expands and thus grips the hat visor edge as it is inserted. The hole fastening mechanism 18 in FIG. 1 on ornamental end members 12 and 14 is a screw type receptacle fitted to accept the endings 22 of the ornamental strand 16 of the ornamentation 10, after which the hole fastening mechanism 18 desirably holds the ornamental end members 12 and 14 in place. Notwithstanding, other types of receptacles 18 may be used, such as in FIG. 4, a hole fastening mechanism without screw threads 18 frictionally gripping the endings 22 of the ornamental strand 16 of the ornamentation 10 tightly enough that the ornamental end members 12 and 14 are not accidentally pulled out of the hole fastening mechanism 18 in an axial direction. The width and length of hole fastening mechanisms 18 are desirably sufficient to hold the ornamental end members 12 and 14 against a reasonable tugging force as might be experienced during installation of the baseball hat visor edge 42, but, as an optional feature, loose enough to permit the hole fastening mechanism 18 to be detached and released from the endings 22 of the ornamental strand 16 of the ornamentation 10 as needed. In FIG. 1, a screw hole fastening mechanism 18 would be one such loosening option on the ornamental end members 12 and 14, the endings 22 of the ornamental strand 16 of the ornamentation 10 also threaded to allow the end members 12 and 14 to be attached. The size and flexibility of the ornamental strand 16 of ornamentation 10 may be such that "one size fits all" baseball hat visor edges 42.

5 [0037] Considering the many different variables of types of fastening mechanisms 18 available for the end members 12 and 14, the FIGS. 1, 3 and 4 show hole fastening mechanisms 18. However, the end members 12 and 14 do not have to be releasably attached to the ornamental strand 16 of the ornamentation 10, for the ornamental strand 16 endings 22 of the ornamentation 10 can be one molded ornamental piece as shown in FIG. 7 attached in some location to the baseball type cap close to edge 42, bottom and top surfaces being decorated.

10 [0038] FIG. 2 is an isometric view of a preferred embodiment showing the ornamental strands 16 of the ornamentation 10 of the present invention gripping the top and bottom surfaces close to the edge 42 in two different locations close to the edge 42 of a hat visor by two ornamental nose-ring like ornamental strand 16 further linked by chain-like ornamentation 20 of ornamentation 10 that releasably attach onto the ornamental nose-ring like fastening mechanism strand 16. In this case the ornamental strands 16 have no ornamental end members 12 and 14. The chain-like ornamentation 20 may take on other designs and features that are consistent with the nature of the embodiment of the invention, namely, to be decorative and releasably connect to the
15 ornamental fastening strands 16, and may be of a stretchable as well as flexible material.

[0039] FIG. 3 is an isometric view of a preferred embodiment showing the ornamentation 10 of the present invention gripping the top and bottom surfaces close to the edge 42 of a hat visor with an ornamental nose-ring like strand 16 and ornamental end members 12 and 14 that are releasably attached onto the ornamental nose-ring like strand 16, with one ornamental end member 12 modified to display a picture graphic. The ornamental strand 16 is reversible and can
20 display the ornamental end member 12 on the inside of the cap bill as well. In such case, the ornamental end member 12 or 14 or both could be LED light balls or glow in the dark balls or any other art form releasably attachable to the ornamental strand 16. In fact, all designs of ornamentation 10 are reversible on the cap bill.

25 [0040] In FIG. 4 is an isometric view of a preferred embodiment showing the ornamentation 10 of the present invention gripping the top and bottom surfaces close to the edge 42 of a hat visor with an ornamental hook-shape fastening mechanism strand 16 further comprising different

design ornamental end members 12 and 14 that attach onto the ornamental hook-shape fastening mechanism strand 16. In this case the ornamental hook-shape fastening mechanism strand 16 has a post type ending with no threads 22 on each end. The ornamental end members 12 and 14 with hole fastening mechanism 18 can be all different shapes and sizes to utilize promotional advertising or displaying a sport or team logo as well.

[0041] FIG. 5 is another isometric view of a preferred embodiment showing the ornamentation 10 of the present invention gripping the top and bottom surfaces close to the edge 42 of a hat visor with an ornamental hook-shape fastening mechanism 16 with an eyelet 24 on one end to receive an ornamental end member 12 that has male snapping fastening mechanism 18 on the backside the snaps onto the eyelet 24 of the ornamental hook-shape fastening mechanism.

[0042] FIG. 6 is an isometric view of a preferred embodiment showing the ornamentation 10 of the present invention gripping the top and bottom surfaces close to the edge 42 of a hat visor with an ornamental hook-shape fastening mechanism 16 with an eyelet 24 on one end further accepting a round catch plate 26 to receive a modified or cut-off nail fastening mechanism 18 of a common type ornamental lapel pin end member 12 that releasably slips into the hole 28 of the catch fastening mechanism 26.

[0043] The last FIG. 7 is an isometric view of a preferred embodiment showing the ornamentation 10 of the present invention gripping the top and bottom surfaces close to the edge 42 of the apex of a hat visor with two ornamental nose-ring like fastening mechanisms 16 molded onto the endings 22 of two ornamental plates of any particular arbitrary design, the end members 12 and 14 permanently attached onto the ornamental nose-ring like fastening mechanisms 16.

[0044] In the ornamentation 10 a user might grasp the ornamental strand 16 in one hand, then the user can grasp with the other hand the baseball hat visor edge 42, and begin to insert one edge of the baseball hat visor 42, into the void 28 thus rendering a tension grip fastening structure comprising an aperture 30 which initiates the insertion of the edge 42 of a baseball hat visor. It

is understood that ornamental end members 12 and 14 having differently configured but similarly effective structural shapes can also be used to grip or otherwise come in contact with the top and bottom surfaces of the edge 42 of a hat visor and are well within the scope of the present invention.

5 [0045] The ornamentation 10 including the end members 12 and 14 may be individually packaged for resale as assembly components or packaged as a single assembled unit. They can be shipped as an assembly product for the end user to decorate and cover as they see fit or pre-assembled in a factory and sent to the retail outlets as a finished product. The user may remove the ornamentation 10 when the user tires of the ornamentation.

10 [0046] Other alterations and modifications of the invention will likewise become apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art upon reading the present disclosure, and it is intended that the scope of the invention disclosed herein be limited only by the broadest interpretation of the appended claims to which the inventors are legally entitled.